



Timeline of the Russian Revolution (1917)

This table accords with the [Julian Calender](#), used by Russia in 1917, which was 13 days behind the calendar in the rest of the world.

Jan 1 Russian troops tenaciously defend Riga against a German offensive (Northern front), while on the Romanian (Central) front troops retreat after a fresh defeat. The Caucasian (Southern) front is relatively quiet. Morale in the army is extremely low: the vast majority of soldiers do not believe in the goals of annexing more territory for Russia. *1.5 million* soldiers deserted the army in 1916. Many soldiers' families are starving (50% of the nation's farmers are fighting in the war), and are being kicked off their land by [kulaks](#).

Meanwhile, ethnic minorities continue to suffer severe repression. The Tsar orders the wide-scale firing of all Jews in government, while crippled Jewish soldiers are sent to Siberia.

Jan 9 The [Bolsheviks](#), whose membership has been steadily increasing to 24,000 people, help organise demonstrations in remembrance of [Bloody Sunday](#). All the main Bolshevik leaders are in prison or exile, so the vast majority of current party decisions are made from the bottom up. 30,000 Moscow workers strike in demonstration, while 145,000 workers strike in [Petrograd](#). Baku, Nizhni Novgorod, Novocherkassk, Voronezh, Kharkov, Rostov-on-Don, the Donbass area, and other cities also conduct a one day strike.

Jan 26 The Workers' Group, a part of the [War Industries Committee](#), has its members arrested by the secret police after appealing for a new Provisional Government.

Jan 31 Petrograd is starving. The city stockpile for flour will last only 10 more days. Meat supplies are completely depleted. Massive queues for food form, despite excruciatingly cold temperatures. Crowds of women sporadically break into stores.

Feb 10 The Councillor of State Mikhail Rodzianko meets with [Tsar Nicholas II](#) in Tsarskoye Selo, and warns him of massive upheaval throughout the country. Rodzianko insists that tumultuous events can be avoided by strengthening the [Duma](#). Nicholas II ignores this advice.

Meanwhile, the Bolsheviks call a strike in Petrograd to protest the 1915 arrest of their Duma members for opposing the war.

Feb 14 The strike called by the Bolsheviks continues, while a [Menshevik](#) called strike begins to show support for the Duma at Taurida Palace (as opposed to the Tsar), which opens a new session. 90,000 workers are on strike, from 58 different factories. Police attempt to arrest demonstrators, but they fight the police back. No workers march on Taurida Palace, as the Mensheviks had hoped. The Bolshevik Petrograd Committee calls on workers to overthrow the Tsar.

Feb 22 The Tsar leaves for the General Headquarters in Mogilev. Meanwhile, the bosses of the Putilov Plant lock-out striking workers.

Feb 23 The [February Revolution](#) begins, ignited by International Women's Day. Militant women textile workers, many of whom are soldiers' wives, initiate a massive strike in Petrograd, despite the protests of their own union leadership. 128,000 workers take to the streets, and among their chief demands is an end to the [World War](#) and an increase in food. Bourgeois history recounts this organized movement as "Bread riots".

Feb 24 The strike doubles in size to around 200,000 workers. Nearly half of all industrial workers in Petrograd are on strike. The new demands of the strike shift heavily towards overthrowing the autocracy and putting an end to the war. Striking workers fraternize with soldiers and Cossacks, while bitterly hating the police.

Feb 25 Vyborg (Bolshevik) workers break into police stations and cut the telephones to Government offices. Armed clashes with the police occur, with many killed and wounded. Meanwhile, Empress Alexandra writes to Nicholas II: *"This is a hooligan campaign, with boys and girls running about shouting that they have no bread... all this will surely pass."* General Khabalov (Commander of the Petrograd District), acting under the Tsar's orders, threatens that he will use any means necessary to ban all demonstrations.

Feb 26 Early Sunday morning, the police launch wide scale arrests of over 100 leaders of revolutionary organisations, including the Bolsheviks. General Khabalov's soldiers, acting under the Tsar's orders, open fire on striking workers. 169 workers are killed, and over 1,000 people are injured. By 4 pm, the 4th company of the Pavlovsky Regiment, outraged that part of their regiment fired on workers, rushes into the street to subdue them. On the way, police try to stop the company,

and a fire fight ensues. General Khabalov orders the company to disarm; some soldiers refuse and join the protestors. Bolshevik workers in the Vyborg district plan to push events into an armed uprising.

Feb 27 Bolshevik agitators visit with soldiers of the Volynsky Regiment with the intention of merely starting a good relationship. Before noon, the soldiers decide to kill the commander of the company that fired on demonstrators the previous day. The soldiers arm themselves, and spread the agitation throughout their entire Regiment. By afternoon, the Litovsky and Preobrazhensky Regiments join this new army, and they storm the Main Arsenal, liberating 40,000 rifles. Fully armed, they move on to liberate political prisoners from Kresty jail.

By nightfall, 66,000 men of the Petrograd garrison — a day ago ordered to fire on striking workers — have now *joined* the striking workers, fully armed! The Bolsheviks continue agitating for the creation of a new government, and the elected delegates (workers, peasants and soldiers) of the Petrograd [Soviet](#) arrive at Taurida Palace, creating the [Executive Committee](#). While the Bolshevik rank and file had been incredibly successful at creating a revolutionary movement, they were unable to get good results in elections to the Soviet. The Mensheviks and [SRs](#), who promise everything under the sun, fair much better. Both parties believe the current revolution needs to be [capitalist](#), before the nation can move into Socialism in the unforeseen future (a political theory called [stagism](#)). The Menshevik [N.S. Chkheidze](#) becomes leader of the Soviet.

Meanwhile, the wheels of the old order keep turning. Rodzianko asks the Duma to convene to resolve on a course

of action. The group creates a [Provisional Committee](#), which urgently asks the Tsar to save himself by sharing power with a Prime Minister. The Tsar refuses.

Feb 28 The revolutionary masses seize the city of Moscow. The Tsar's Ministers are arrested. The Provisional Committee assumes control of the Army, while the Kronstadt sailors mutiny against their officers. The first issue of [Izvestia](#) is published; a newspaper of the Petrograd Soviet.

Mar 1 The first Joint Plenum of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies issues [Soviet Order No. 1](#): all soldiers' units will elect Soldiers' Committees. The decree stipulates that soldiers will now accept orders from the Soldiers' Soviet and their locally elected committees. The Soviet also forbids its members from joining the soon to form government, but recognizes the authority of the Duma.

Mar 2 The Soviet and Duma continue discussions on the formation of a new government. At the Soviet Plenum, the Bolsheviks criticize the lack of focus on questions of land, peace, and the 8 hour day. On the request of the Provisional Committee, Nicholas II abdicates power to his brother Mikhail, who refuses power. Thus ends their hopes to keep the monarchy alive, side by side to the new [Provisional Government](#). Workers, soldiers, and young people take to the streets, tearing down statues of the Tsar, and set alight the Imperial emblems. Loyalist police ambush and shoot the revelers, but armed Soviet soldiers hunt the police down and arrest them. Whenever a cop is uncovered in the middle of a crowd, however, their fate is more severe.

Mar 3 The Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet orders the arrest of Nicholas II.

- Mar 5** The first issue of [Pravda](#) is published, since being closed down as a result of its peaceful stance on the World War.
- Mar 6** The Provisional Government declares a general amnesty for all political prisoners.
- Mar 8** The Petrograd Soviet creates the [Contact Commission](#) as an organ of communication with the Provisional Government. Meanwhile, the Provisional Government refuses to allow Finland the independence it demands.
- Mar 9** The USA is the first government in the world to formally recognize the new Provisional Government. Two days later, France, England, and Italy would follow suit, after receiving assurance the government would continue to wage war.
- Mar 12** [Stalin](#) arrives in Petrograd after being released from prison. Three days later, he is appointed to the editorial board of Pravda. Also on the 12th, the Provisional government repeals the death penalty.
- Mar 14** The Petrograd Soviet addresses "the people of the whole world" declaring an earnest desire for peace, an end to World War I, without annexations or indemnities.
- Mar 17** Poland appeals for independence. The Provisional Government refuses.
- Mar 18** Stalin becomes a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.
- Mar 19** The Provisional Government refuses to pass an agrarian act for the desperate food crisis in the nation, and the wide-scale disenfranchisement of the peasantry. Instead, the Government condemns looters and forced seizures of the land.

Mar 20 The Provisional Government abolishes all religious and ethnic restrictions formerly imposed by the Monarchy. Non-Russian languages are now allowed at private educational institutions and record keeping.

Mar 21 Lenin's [Letters from Afar](#), are published, though highly
-22 abridged.

Mar 27 [Trotsky](#) leaves exile in New York to return to Russia. Meanwhile, the Provisional Government declares that its purpose in continuing the war is solely for the defence of Russia. This serves as a compromise position with the Petrograd Soviet, which accepts this new formulation.

Mar 31 [Plekhanov](#) arrives in Petrograd, after nearly 40 years in exile. Plekhanov is a different man from when he left, now supporting the War for territory, and the advance of capitalism in Russia.

Apr 3 Lenin, Zinoviev, and other Bolsheviks arrive in Petrograd from [exile in Switzerland](#). They are met at the train station by a large contingent of jubilant workers, soldiers, and party members.

Apr 4 Lenin delivers his [April Thesis](#). The Bolsheviks soon produce an educational pamphlet for workers on [Political Parties in Russia and the Tasks of the Proletariat](#). Meanwhile, the steamer Trotsky is travelling on is stopped for inspection by the British Navy in Canada, and despite the General Amnesty and having his visa in order, he is [thrown into a British prison](#), along with several other Socialists for their opposition to the War.

Apr 12 The Provisional Government passes a law allowing the freedom of meetings and unions.

- Apr 18** Massive [May Day](#) celebrations occur in Russia. Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Miliukov secretly promises the Allies that Russia will continue the war until complete victory and the annexation of new territory is achieved.
- Apr 20** Miliukov's secret note is [leaked](#), prompting armed demonstrations of furious soldiers in the streets for two days. The Bolsheviks [resolve](#) that the resignation of Miliukov is not enough; a new Soviet government must be formed, and give party members [new instructions](#).
- May 1** The Petrograd Soviet votes in favour of forming a new, [Coalition Government](#), despite Bolshevik condemnation and in contradiction to the March 1 decision of the Soviet. Weeks earlier, Lenin warned about the dangers of this new [Dual Power](#). Miliukov's resignation comes on the following day.
- May 4** Trotsky arrives in Russia after being released from prison by the British Government.
- May 10** The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies resolves that *only* discharged and wounded soldiers can perform as militiamen. Lenin explains his [critique](#).
- May 17** The Kronstadt Soviet declares itself the sole governing power of Kronstadt.
- May 31** Minister of War [Guchkov](#), a member of the Cadet party, resigns after street demonstrations against him. Kerensky replaces him.
- Jun 3** The [First All-Russian Congress of Soviets](#) begins in Petrograd. The Congress almost unanimously agrees to end World War I, though only through tremendous consternation agrees to support the Provisional

Government, despite Bolshevik protests. Tensions flare between the parties, with the Mensheviks insisting that the Bolsheviks must be disarmed, despite not having weapons, which would in practice mean disarming the Soldiers' Soviets. The [Thermidor](#) of the February Revolution is beginning to boil. The Bolsheviks insist that all power must go to the Soviets.

Jun 5 The Parliament in Finland (a territory of Russia) declares Finland a sovereign state, except on questions of foreign policy and war. The Provisional Government sends troops to crush the Parliament, which soon wavers, and votes in favour of their own dissolution.

Jun 10 The Central Rada (formed in Kiev on March 4) proclaims the independence of the Ukraine. The ongoing Congress of Soviets unanimously supports this declaration of independence.

Meanwhile, [the demonstration](#) the Bolsheviks planned to hold against the Government is banned. The Mensheviks then go factory to factory, telling workers not to stage a demonstration, who in turn berate the Mensheviks. The Mensheviks see a massive conspiracy – "The masses are thick with Bolsheviks" – and secretly ask the Cossacks to help them crush the Bolsheviks, to which the Cossack ataman replies: "We, Cossacks, will never go against the Soviet." Whole regiments accept the ban on the demonstration solely on the basis of Bolshevik acceptance, whose party policy wholly accepts any and all decisions of the Soviet.

Jun 11 The Mensheviks continue their assault on the Bolsheviks, agitating that they be arrested, and claim the party is controlled by Germany. After days of debate, the

Mensheviks drop their demand to disarm the workers. Further, realizing their support would vaporize following the dispersal of the June 10 protests, the Mensheviks put forward a motion to hold demonstrations on the 18th, and the Soviet passes the motion.

Jun 18 [Kerensky](#) launches a fresh offensive on the Eastern Front, despite incredibly low morale, poor supplies and logistics, and in the absence of sound strategic thinking. German counter-attacks bring devastating losses: 150,000 Russians are killed, with nearly 250,000 wounded. The pro-peace Bolsheviks show their massive support with an [enormous demonstration](#) against the war of 400,000 workers and soldiers in Petrograd, Moscow, Kiev, Kharkov, Ekaterinoslav, and other cities, nearly all protestors carrying banners echoing the Bolshevik line.

Meanwhile, under the cover of the demonstrations, the Anarchists attack several prisons, "liberating" 460 criminals. The Provisional Government turns this into propaganda, claiming the Bolsheviks helped. Many of the Petrograd Anarchists are arrested.

Jun 21 After the demonstration of the 18th, workers at the Putilov factory go on strike. The Bolsheviks, together with workers from 70 other factories, meet with the Putilov workers, sympathize with their grievances, but call for restraint. Workers are starving. Soldiers demand to be sent home to plough the fields: the 1st Machine Gun Regiment declares that "detachments shall be sent to the front only when the war has a revolutionary character." Entire divisions of soldiers are arrested for disobedience. Soldiers are constantly demanding that Bolsheviks immediately overthrow the government, but the Bolsheviks need the

support of the *entire* Soviet. Lenin understands that the present calamities will lead to a change in the Soviet, which will *then* enable a real, democratic, Soviet revolution.

Jun 23 The Kronstadt Anarchists demand the liberation of Petrograd anarchists, lest they liberate them by force.

Jun 24 Izvestia reports plans by the Provisional Government to close a series of factories in Petrograd, potentially leaving thousands jobless. Meanwhile, the Oranienbaum garrisons inform the government that they support Kronstadt.

Jun 26 The Grenadier Guard Regiment returns from the front and joins the Kronstadt Anarchists.

Jul 1 The 2nd Machine Gun Regiment demands: *All power to the Soviets!*, while the 3rd Infantry Regiment refuses to send 14 replacement companies to the front. Meanwhile, the 1st Machine Gun Regiment marches from Oranienbaum to Petrograd. The Soviet Executive Committee, now sharing power within the Provisional Government, tells them to go home, but the soldiers refuse. The Bolsheviks organise for the machine-gunners to have food and quarters. According to the historian/observer Sukhanov, in these days Petrograd "felt itself to be upon the verge of some sort of explosion."

Jul 3 **July Days.** After receiving an order to go to the front, thousands of machine-gunners hold a meeting about an armed insurrection. The Bolsheviks try to cool things off, while the Anarchists stoke the fire. The soldiers decide to march, fully armed, and send delegates from one factory after another, with workers dropping everything to join the march. Tens of thousands go marching, demanding *All power to the Soviets!*

The Bolsheviks change tactics. No longer trying to restrain the masses, they agree to support them, so long as they peacefully march to the seat of government, elect delegates, and present their demands to the Executive Committee of the Soviets. The masses agree.

Meanwhile, the Government spends the entire day calling on troops from across the country to come in defence of the capital. The Mensheviks and SRs decry the Bolsheviks for the insurrection, claiming they are threatening the Soviets. The leadership of the Petrograd Soviet changes its composition and becomes a Bolshevik majority. Further strengthening the Bolshevik majority, the Mensheviks and SRs refuse to co-operate and walk out, having lost their majority power. They remain in control of the Soviet Executive Committee, and thus the ravine deepens further between local Soviets and the Soviet Executive Committee.

Jul 4 At 3am, 80,000 workers and soldiers reach the Tauride Palace. [Junkers](#) meet the demonstrators, and tear up placards. A shot is fired, but disaster is averted. The Bolsheviks spend the early hours of morning figuring out how to organize the demonstrators.

By 11 am the demonstrators assemble yet again. Now, entire Regiments arrive, but they are no longer at the front of the demonstrations: the workers have taken the lead by sheer mass of numbers. Even in factories where Mensheviks and SRs hold influence, four out of five workers join the demonstrations. The nation witnesses a massive General Strike. Lenin speaks to the demonstrators, encouraging their slogan of *All power to the Soviets!*

Over 500,000 people attend the demonstrations in Petrograd. The first of the soldiers from the front arrive

ready to support the Provisional Government, and frightened that a revolution is imminent, are ordered to launch ambushes against the masses. 400 people are killed and wounded. The Mensheviks, hands covered in blood, eventually "convince" the demonstrators to go home.

Jul 5

At 6am, the Government begins the offensive. The offices and printing machinery of *Pravda* are destroyed. Workers distributing the paper are murdered in the streets. Ironically, the last documents to come from the press are the continued Bolshevik position of *stopping* the demonstration. Government agents then ransack the Kshesinskaya Palace, headquarters of the Bolshevik Central Committee and Petrograd Committee. Union and Soviet workers are arrested in mass from factories and meeting halls in retaliation for their leadership of the demonstrations. Wide-scale fear and intimidation grips the city as the police presence intensifies to an almost martial law status; the mere mention of Lenin or the Bolsheviks is cause for arrest.

Jul 6

Around 120 Kronstadt sailors refuse to give in, and retreat to the Peter and Paul fortress. [Red Guards](#) (a militia of regular factory workers) accompany the sailors, following their pledge to protect them. The Government forces setup a barricade and begin a siege. Stalin mediates and reaches an agreement with both sides: the Kronstadters will disarm, in return for getting free passage back to Kronstadt.

The General Strike comes to an end, and workers return to their jobs, fearful of arrest. The Government induced terror becomes near hysteria and countless numbers are arrested as spies. All troops called in from the front arrive in Petrograd, in a massive show of force.

- Jul 7** The Provisional Government orders the [arrest of Lenin](#), claiming he is a German spy, and that the Bolsheviks [incited the uprising](#). The Provision Government further orders the disbandment of the Petrograd garrison.
- Jul 8** Kerensky becomes head of the government, after Lvov resigns. The Provisional Government attempts to improve public relations, and announces that it will hold elections to the [Constituent Assembly](#) on September 17, work on legislation for the 8 hour day, create better labor safety, and carry out land reform. None of these promises would be kept.
- Jul 11** Lenin [goes into hiding](#).
- Jul 12** The Provisional Government re-introduces a law allowing drumhead trials at the front (summary executions for retreating, etc). Furthermore, all radical political ideals are censored, and many newspapers are shut down. On the 19th, Lenin [responds](#) that a worker's government will "close down the bourgeoisie's newspapers".
- Jul 18** General L.G. [Kornilov](#) becomes the Supreme Commander in Chief of the Russian Armed Forces.
- Jul 24** The Second Coalition Government is formed; Kerensky appoints himself President. The Mensheviks, [Cadets](#), and SRs join the government.
- Jul 26 - Aug 3** [Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.\(B\)](#) occurs, representing 240,000 party members. Since Lenin is in hiding, Stalin delivers the report on the work of the Central Committee. The Congress resolves that a peaceful revolution has become impossible. Further, the Party decides on the

principle of [democratic centralism](#).

Aug Since March, 568 enterprises, laying off more than 104,000 workers, have closed down. Prices on average have risen by 248% compared to 1913 prices, though urban centres are hit the hardest; in Moscow prices inflated by 836%. Meanwhile, real wages fell by 57.4% since 1913. Bread rations are severe; in Moscow the ration allows 2 pounds of bread per person, for an entire week. In this month, there are 440 cases where peasants and soldiers seize the land of big estate holders. The Provisional Government can barely keep up with the amount of work required to suppress the countless uprisings.

Aug 3 Stalin is elected to the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks.

Aug 12 The Provisional Government holds a [State Conference](#) in Moscow. Workers Soviets overwhelming vote for a general strike in opposition to the Conference, but the Petrograd Soviet votes 364 to 304 to not strike. The Workers partly accept this, and instead strike for a single day: 400,000 workers walk out. As a result of the backwardness of the Petrograd Soviet, a vote is taken to hold new elections, and receives support in the form of 175 votes to 4.

Aug 14 The division in the State Conference becomes palpable when General Kornilov arrives. Kerensky patriotically asserts his authority, to which Miliukov explains: "In reality, he invokes only a feeling of pity". Kornilov speaks with heavy defeatism, with attentive Allied diplomats in the audience, and explains that the Germans can easily win Riga, and if he is not allowed a full military dictatorship, Petrograd is sure

to fall. Rhetoric vehemently crosses the aisles, threats abound; open fighting nearly breaks out. The government is starkly divided between Social Democracy and Military Dictatorship. Amazingly, world renowned Anarchist [Peter Kropotkin](#) shows his support for the defence of Russia through a dictatorship, explaining that: "We need a federation such as they have in the United States."

Aug 18 The Petrograd Soviet, despite the objection of Menshevik president Cheidze, holds a vote on the abolition of the death penalty. The vote resolves: 900 to 4 to abolish the death penalty. *Only* the top leaders of the Menshevik party — Tseretelli, Cheidze, Dan, Lieber — vote against. On the 22nd, the Provisional Government agrees to abide by the Soviet decision, fearful of retribution otherwise.

Aug 19 Kornilov demands that Kerensky allow him to reassign his army to Petrograd. Kerensky refuses.

Aug 21 The Germans, just as Kornilov promised, occupy Riga. No defence of Riga is attempted by the Russian army, who simply retreats, allowing the Germans to occupy this "nest of Bolshevism". According to reporter John Reed, many of the officers and bourgeoisie prefer a defeat to Germany than soldiers committee's and Bolshevism. Kerensky, seeing his position is weak, makes trips to the front, where he vaguely promises several General's that sometime soon he will create a "directory" which will assume military control. Meanwhile, Kornilov summons 4,000 of his most loyal officers (4 from each regiment), and shares his vision to hang every last Bolshevik and Soviet member. Kornilov had agreed with Kerensky's plan of a military dictatorship, with just one exception: leave out Kerensky.

Aug 22 Kerensky, thinking he has reached agreement for dictatorship, *now asks* Kornilov to send a Cavalry corps to Petrograd in order to introduce martial law. Kornilov pauses.

Aug 25 Kerensky is notified that he will receive the Cavalry Corps from Kornilov, as requested. Kerensky's sighs relief as his secret military seizure of power is ready for the overthrowing the Provisional Government and the Soviets. Even Kerensky's own party is unaware of the deal he has struck. As if playing chess, Kornilov tells Kerensky that surely Petrograd is too dangerous for him. Kornilov would be happy to put Kerensky 'under his personal protection'. Kerensky begins to waver.

Aug 26 Kerensky momentarily discards his dictatorship ambitions, and begins to plot against Kornilov. The Cadets withdraw from the Provisional Government, waiting to see which side will prevail. In a move to shore up support from the bourgeoisie, the Provisional Government meets with the largest Russian landlords, and agrees to double the price of grain, despite enormous protest from the Executive Committee of the Soviet. Meanwhile, the Bolshevik press continues to tell the masses that it is *not* calling for an insurrection, and tries to dispel government placed rumours to the contrary.

Aug 27 Kerensky telegrams Kornilov: relieve your command, and come to Petrograd. Kornilov publicly announces: The Provisional Government is composed of German spies, is hostage to the Bolsheviks and Soviets, and is responsible for the loss of Riga. Kornilov sends three cavalry divisions to capture Petrograd. Kerensky feebly orders them to halt, and declares Kornilov a traitor. Meanwhile, the Bolsheviks begin

organising the arming of the Petrograd workers for self-defense.

Aug 28 Kerensky vacillates, and demands the press retract his comments on Kornilov's treachery. The newspapers have already printed. Stock prices soar on reading of the morning news: the bourgeois are sure Kornilov will win. The English military mission comes out in support of Kornilov.

The rank and file of the workers, however, have different plans. When part of Kornilov's army arrives in a Petrograd train station, the workers delay letting the trains through. Some soldiers are 'mistakenly' sent in the wrong direction. The workers fraternize with the Cossacks, and start to politically persuade some of them. Their commander, Krymov, stricken with fear of Bolshevik propaganda, orders his soldiers out of Petrograd to a small village several kilometres away. Once again however, rank and file agitators, without any central command, immediately spying up in the villages, and the Cossacks begin to hold soviet-like meetings of their own. Kornilov's "Savage Division" meets a similar fate, and after some Communist agitation, they hoist a red flag and arrest their staff commander! Revolutionary fevour spreads through the masses like a contagion.

Aug 29 Nearly every district in Petrograd has organized Red Guards, now totaling 40,000 armed workers, with thousands of support personnel. Rail workers tear up tracks to prevent Kornilov's advance; postal and telegraph workers practice a slow-down and hold military communications, sending pertinent copies to the Bolsheviks. Days shorter than 16 hours are rare for the Red workers. Bolshevik soldiers begin to arrive from Kronstadt and Vyborg. Meanwhile, the

garrisons in Kronstadt and Vyborg mutiny, and shoot any officers who declare allegiance to Kornilov.

Aug 30 The Soviet announces that Kornilov has been defeated, his army completely demoralized.

Sep 1 A wave of support floods the Soviet Central Executive Committee from the Urals, the Donbas, the Central Industrial region, the Ukraine, Belorussia, Central Asia, etc. 126 local Soviets demand the Petrograd Soviet take power. The Petrograd Soviet adopts a resolution to support the Bolshevik party. The Mensheviks and SRs try to filibuster, but the resulting vote is still devastating: 279 to 115. This brings Bolshevik support to four major cities: Petrograd, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Kronstadt, and Krasnoyarsk. The number of land seizures by the peasants increases to 958 incidents. Meanwhile, Kerensky openly declares Russia a "Republic", and arrests General Kornilov.

Sep 2 A joint session of all Soviets in Finland (a territory of Russia) vote on a Soviet Government: 700 to 13. The Bolshevik party position on the right of nationalities to secede from Russia is well known, and in less than 2 months Finland would gain its independence.

Sep 4 Trotsky and other Bolshevik leaders are released from prison after massive public pressure. Kerensky attempts to disband the Military Revolutionary Committee; it refuses.

Sep 5 The Moscow Soviet announces its support for a Soviet Government (355 - 254 votes). At a Congress of Soviets of Siberia, held in Krasnoyarsk, the Soviet renews its pledge of support for the Bolshevik party.

Sep 8 Sailors of the Baltic Fleet, through their elected organs, declare that they will not recognize the authority of the Provisional Government, nor will they execute any of its orders. On the 11th, the Central Committee of the Black Sea fleet demands: *All power to the Soviets!* Meanwhile, the Kiev Soviet votes in favour of a Soviet Government (130 - 66 votes).

Sep 9 The Mensheviks and SRs desperately try to reassert their influence in the Soviets, and convoke a new session, with over 1,000 deputies, to try to undo the September 1 decision. The Soviet again votes, now 519 - 414 votes (67 abstentions), in favour of a Soviet Government.

Sep 12 Lenin illegally publishes [Lessons of Revolution](#), recounting events since the February Revolution. Lenin also finishes his most important theoretical work: [The State and Revolution](#).

Sep 14 Lenin finishes his work [The Impending Catastrophe and How To Combat It](#), where he presents a detailed outline of what the Bolsheviks will do to save the country from ruin. Lenin also sends a letter to the Central Committee in both Moscow and Petrograd, explaining [The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power](#).

Sep 14 The Provisional Government convokes a "Democratic Conference", with 1,200 delegates, in the hope of creating some kind of democratic legitimacy. Bolsheviks are in attendance, though the government aimed to arrest Lenin and Zinoviev, who did not attend. The conference votes against forming a new Coalition government. The Provisional Government, unhappy with this decision, decides to form a representative "Provisional Council" within the Conference to decide this issue, which in turn

refuses a new Coalition government. Determined to get a "correct" result, a "Pre-parliament" is then created, chosen mostly by the Provisional Government, and this group approves a new Coalition government! The Bolsheviks agree to participate in the new Pre-parliament, despite the objections of Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, and others. During this time, Lenin publishes an article [On Compromises](#), explaining the Bolsheviks will seek compromises with others, so long as it does not betray their core principles.

Sep 18 Kerensky orders the dissolution of the Central Committee of the Baltic Fleet. The fleet refuses. In Tashkent, the Soviet overthrows the local government. Kerensky sends troops to take back the city, and succeeds; with many arrests and the re-introduction (when peasants were last serfs in 1861) of public flogging. Workers from 40 soviets immediately call a General Strike in response, lasting for a week.

Sep 23 The Bolshevik Central Committee approves a list of candidates for the Constituent Assembly, which includes Lenin and Stalin.

Sep 25 The third (and last) meeting of the Coalition government occurs, amidst staunch protests from the elected Soviets. Trotsky is elected as Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet.

Oct Trade union membership amounts to nearly 2 million workers throughout Russia. In 1917, the total population of the country is [145 million](#). No hard occupational data exists for 1917, but by December, 1926, after a huge growth in the working class, the total number of workers in the USSR only amounts to 7.93 million workers; e.g. making up around 5% of the total population of the country. In 1917, the number of workers was considerably less than this. Fraternization of

Russian and German soldiers increases dramatically, and throughout the front mass mutinies occur in favour of elected officers.

Oct 5 With Trotsky, Stalin, and other Bolshevik leaders present, the party votes again on their earlier decision to join the Pre-Parliament. This time around, only 1 vote (Kamenev) supports joining the government.

Oct 6 The Petrograd Soldiers' Soviet declares that it no longer reports to the Provisional Government.

Oct 7 The Pre-parliament begins its first session. When the Bolshevik time slot arrives, Trotsky delivers a scathing speech, and drops a bombshell: the Bolsheviks will not participate. For the next 11 days the Pre-parliament tries to create some unity among its remaining members, but on their first and most urgent question — what to do about the War — it fails to find a majority position. Mass confusion and despair began to set in, as delegates confront their profound ineptitude. Meanwhile, Headquarters plans to launch a new offensive before the 20th, which many Generals (who support the government) think is "completely crazy".

Oct 10 The Bolshevik Central Committee debates and approves the decision to overthrow the Provisional Government, and to follow the [tactics suggested by Lenin](#), who illegally arrived in Petrograd 3 days earlier. Kamenev and Zinoviev strongly disagree with the majority decision to overthrow the government. The [Politburo](#) is created.

Oct 12 The Petrograd Soviet creates its own Military Revolutionary Committee, which will lead the insurrection.

Oct 14 Lenin responds to the challenge from the Mensheviks and SRs on [Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?](#)

Oct 18 The Bolsheviks Kamenev and Zinoviev announce the Bolshevik plan for revolution in a Menshevik newspaper. Lenin demands that both be expelled from the party, despite his close relations with them. Kamenev and Zinoviev defend their position before the party: explaining they are simply expressing a difference of opinion. Lenin [responds](#) that public dissent is certainly acceptable, but not *after* a decision of such a serious nature and magnitude (similar to that of a strike) is democratically made by the party. While they would both be expelled, they were soon after forgiven. Stalin would later interpret these events, and how they should be handled, differently...

Oct 19 Kerensky demands the General Secretary of Ukraine to immediately come to Petrograd, likely to be arrested. The District Attorney is meanwhile ordered to investigate the Rada for "criminal activity". Meanwhile, Kerensky also threatens the arrest of the elected officers of the Baltic fleet, if they continue to refuse to deliver freight. The Regional Committee threatens Kerensky to carry out his threat. Meanwhile, the All-Russian conference of factory and shop committees resolve to support *All power to the Soviets!*

Oct 20 The recently appointed Minister of War Verkhovsky makes an impromptu appearance before the Pre-Parliament, and demands that Russia immediately make peace or face complete catastrophe. He is completely ridiculed, and sent on a leave of absence.

Oct 23 For several weeks the Bolsheviks have been carrying on extensive campaigns of agitation throughout the country. Though missing great speakers in Lenin, Zinoviev and Kamenev; Trotsky and [Sverdlov](#) work tirelessly. Most importantly, however, are the thousands upon thousands of ordinary workers, soldiers, peasants, and sailors who convince their fellow workers that the time has come to seize power in their own hands. The Soviets issue "Revolutionary Decree No. 1": hiring and firing of workers is controlled by the Soviet.

Oct 24 The Provisional Government attempts to close the current underground Bolshevik newspaper (which since July had moved offices and changed names: Lislok Pravdy, Proletary, Flaboehy, Raboehy Put). At the same time, an offensive is launched against Smolny -- the headquarters of the Bolshevik Central Committee and the Revolutionary Military Committee.

The [October Revolution](#) begins. By nightfall, Trotsky has led the Red Guards and soviet workers to control all the bridges that cross the Neva (except the Dvortsovyi) and key positions throughout the city, including all roads into the city. Lenin arrives at Smolny, and takes command of the Red Guards and Workers' Soviets.

Oct 25 By morning, the Red Guards have seized the General Post Office, the Nikolaevsky, Varshaysky and Baltiisky train stations, the power stations, the State Bank, the central telephone exchange, and main Government buildings. The Winter Palace, General Staff headquarters, the Mariinsky Palace, and a few other points still remain in the hands of the Provisional Government. At 10am the Revolutionary Military Committee publishes: [To the citizens of Russia!](#),

announcing victory.

In Moscow, revolutionary forces encounter stiff opposition from Colonel Ryabtsev. The battles are fierce with casualties on both sides.

At 10:40 in the evening, the [Second All-Russian Congress of the Soviets](#) opens in the Smolny, and the Mensheviks and SRs walk-out. Kerensky flees to the North, in order to start a counter-revolutionary rebellion. In retrospect, of the 26 current members of the Bolshevik Central Committee at the time of the revolution, 12 would be [executed in the purges of the 1930s](#).

Oct 26 At 2am, the Winter Palace is captured, thus bringing victory for the revolution in Petrograd, without a single life lost by either side. The Congress of Soviets resolves at 3am: [To Workers, Soldiers, and Peasants!](#). Further, the [Decree on Peace](#) and the [Decree on Land](#) is issued, in addition to the formation of a [new Government](#).

Meanwhile, the Soviet Government issues the [Decree on the Suppression of Hostile Newspapers](#), in its first act of censorship.

Oct 27 Under the leadership of General Krasnov and Kerensky, units of the Third Cavalry Corps drive toward Petrograd. During the day and the morrow, they seize the cities of Gatchina and Tsarskoe Selo and capture the Pulkovo Hills. By the end of the night, Soviet power is successfully established in Minsk, Kronstadt, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Lugansk, Kazan, Rostov-on-Don, Ekaterinburg, Revel, Samara and Saratov.

Oct 29 Junkers launch an insurrectionary attempt within Petrograd, but are quickly defeated by the Red Guard on the same day.

Meanwhile, the Vikzhel (Executive Committee of Railwaymen) demand a "United Socialist Government"; composed of Mensheviks, SRs, and Bolsheviks. Until this occurs, they refuse to transport food. The rank and file do not fully agree, and food nonetheless trickles into the cities. Lenin insists that nothing should be done: the rail workers themselves will resolve the issue (and in January the workers did, by electing a new Central Committee).

Oct 31 The Soviet Revolution wins in Baku; now holding a total of 17 provincial capitals. Meanwhile, Red Guards confront General Krasnov's troops head on, and after taking back the Pulkovo Hills outside of Petrograd, the opposition dissolves.

Nov 1 The Soviet revolution gains control in Tashkent. In the North, General Krasnov is taken prisoner, but Kerensky again escapes.

Nov 2 The Soviet Government proclaims the [Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia](#), permitting the nationalities of Russia to break away and have full independence. Meanwhile, [M. V. Frunze](#) leads the Red Guards of Petrograd, sailors of the Baltic Fleet, and Red Guard detachments from Ivanovo-Voznesensk to reinforce the Moscow workers. This breaks the back of the counter-revolutionary forces.

Nov 3 The Kremlin in Moscow is secured, ending the battle for Moscow. Meanwhile, amidst strife inside the Bolshevik party where a minority refuses to co-operate in the new government, Lenin [issues an ultimatum](#): either split and create a new party, or adhere to [democratic centralism](#). Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov, Nogin and others, citing the Vikzhel issue among others, decide to leave the party. Sverdlov is elected Chairman of the All-Russian Central

Executive Committee to replace L. Kamenev.

- Nov 5** Lenin proclaims the [victory of the revolution](#), assuring people *"Remember that now you yourselves are at the helm of state. No one will help you if you yourselves do not unite and take into your hands all affairs of the state. Your Soviets are from now on the organs of state authority, legislative bodies with full powers."*
- Nov 9** Commander in Chief Dukhonin is relieved from his post, following his [refusal](#) to seek an [immediate armistice](#). "Ensign Krylenko is appointed Commander-in-Chief" in his place. General Dukhonin responds by organising loyal soldiers to attack the Soviet government.
- Nov 18** A Soviet government is established in Vladivostok.
- Nov 20** The Ukrainian Rada declares itself an independent nation. Meanwhile, General Dukhonin is defeated by the Red Guards at Mogilev.
- Nov 21** The Soviet Government publishes a decree allowing citizens to [recall politicians from office](#).
- Nov 23** The Soviet Government publishes a decree [limiting the salaries](#) of high paid officials.
- Nov 26** Beginning their efforts to end World War I, the Soviet Government begins peace talks with the Axis powers in [Brest-Litovsk](#).
- Nov 28** The Soviet Government presently controls 28 provincial capitals, in addition to every major industrial center of the country. The Government orders the [arrest of the](#)

[leadership](#) of the Cadet party.

Meanwhile, the eight hour day is introduced for railway workers, and the Commissariat of Public Education is created, removing the monopoly on education formerly held by the Russian Orthodox Church.

Dec 3 The CPC recognize the right of the Ukraine to secede, [unconditionally and without reservations](#). The Ukrainian Rada, however, refuses to allow Ukrainian Soviets to meet and hold a Congress. The CPC informs the Rada that it either allow democracy or consider itself at war with Russia.

Dec 6 For the first time in history, Russian women, who ushered in the era of the Russian Revolution, win the [right to divorce](#). In just 3 years, Russian women would again be the first in history to win the right to maternity leave of 4 months, along with a litany of other rights establishing true gender equality.

Dec 7 The Checka is created to combat counter-revolution and sabotage, Dzerzhinsky is appointed as the chairman. The first charter of this organ is to [track the economic activity of wealthy people](#).

Dec 14 [Nationalization of the Banks](#) is proclaimed.

Dec 15 The Soviet Government offers its first armistice to the Central Powers, in an attempt to end the war, and the Army Congress on the Demobilisation of the Army begins.

Dec 17 Results from the elections to the Constituent Assembly are in, with mixed results for the Bolsheviks. 36 million votes are cast, with 58% going to the Socialist Revolutionaries;

25% to the Bolsheviks; 13% to the Cadets; and 4% to the Mensheviks. This voting reflects the popularity of the SRs with the rural peasantry (a majority of the voting population), while the Bolsheviks largely win the votes of urban voters (winning 53% of the vote in Moscow and Petrograd). Moreover, the Bolsheviks win a majority of the votes of the army and fleet. Having won the majority of these two groups would lead to the Bolshevik's basis for justification of dissolving the Constituent Assembly in January.

Dec 19 Finland announces its independence from Russia. Meanwhile, the CPC [accepts an offer of negotiation](#) from the Ukrainian Rada. The negotiations soon fail.

Dec 25 The First All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets declares Ukraine a Soviet Socialist Republic, still independent from Russia, and disavows the Rada. The Ukrainian Soviets, along with Russian Red Guards, would successfully defeat the Rada on January 26, 1918.

Dec 31 The Soviet CPC accepts Finnish independence, even though the Finnish government is completely bourgeois.

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